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Brittain's Poems

COMPOSED BY

COLONEL I. J. BRITTAIN

424 MAPLE STREET,

WINSTON-SALEM, N. C.

READER: I am an old, disabled Confederate veteran. I will keep these books in stock. Never lend them, but refer inquirers to me.

I. J. BRITTAIN.

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The Wonders of the Present Age

I have been tempted much of late
To write at least a page
Upon some works of recent date,
The wonders of the age.

We in an age of wonders live,
Wherein the skill of man
Seems an impulsive to receive
And do what mortal can.

In fourteen hundred brave Guttenburg
Invented types of wood.
He thought the harm that art might cause
Would be overcome with good.

Now we have colleges and schools,
Which number hundreds and more
And flourish under better rules
Than ever known before.

The truckles, carts and sleds once drawn
By oxen through the mud
Are out of use, forgot and gone
Like things before the flood.

Steamships ride on the stormy main,
Steamboats on rivers ply,
And locomotives o'er the plain
With greater swiftness fly.

We daily hear the humming sound,
The ringing of the cars,
Within a few miles of your own ground
On trails of iron bars.

The steam let through a copper horn
Produces a thrilled sound,
And on the gentle breezes borne
Is heard for miles around.

We sometimes hear it at our homes,
Resounding upon the air,
Its object is the hogs and cows
From off the track to scare.

Though many a cow is doomed to feel
The locomotive's weight;
And hogs have scarcely time to squeal
Before it is too late.

And yet no farmer loses more
Than balances his gain,
For higher prices than before
Are paid for pork and grain.

Through every State and every clime
 They have their railroads done,
 And twenty minutes it will take
 Each fifteen miles to run.

And forty cents for each fifteen
 The passenger must pay,
 And have a pleasant ride between
 The depot and the way.

I now will try my rustic muse
 On the magnetic wires,
 That Morse contrived to carry news
 Wherever man desires.

The word is sent as quick as thought,
 Upon some lightning's speed,
 What bank is broke, what rogue is caught,
 What swindler still succeeds.

I said full forty years ago
 That it was not unfair
 To say in less than fifty years
 We would navigate the air.

A new invention Bill has made,
 That's now within our homes,
 Composed of drums and copper wite,
 And called it telephone.

The electric shock is a monster power,
 We feel it more and more,
 It chased and captured both cross and white
 Beyond the Canadian shore.

It is like other gifts of God,
 Produces life and death,
 And brings forth crops through earth and sod;
 We breathe it in every breath.

For other things it now is used,
 We see it every hour;
 The machinery all over the land
 Is run by electric motor power.

We have fine factories way up North,
 With ease they weave and spin,
 Full half their honor is due the South
 And Whitney's cotton gin.

The farmers of the present day
 Will never be content
 Unless they have the best of seed
 And farming implements.

The ladies in their humble sphere
 To have their minds serene,
 To have the best cooking range
 And Singer sewing machine.

The quality of all our crops
 Is held in high repute
 There is nothing that excells them all
 Like luscious nursery fruit.

Old fogey traits and ignorance
 We see are bound to go,
 I am glad we live when it's no disgrace
 For a girl to have a beau.

We have fine colleges where deaf and blind
 Are taught to read and write,
 They expand their minds and serve their God
 Without the use of sight.

The tallow candle is past and gone,
 The gas lamp took its flight,
 We substitute great kerosene
 And the electric light.

The locomotive wends its way
 Upon two iron bars,
 By the help of electricity we ride
 The trolley cars.

The old farm wagon trudges on,
 The dude will ride his wheel,
 The gentry of the present day
 Will ride the automobile.

While on my tour through the West
 The deep wells I often pass,
 And found the towns and farmers' homes
 Lit up by natural gas:

Inventions now are being made,
 They're going lore and aft,
 There's nothing has surprised the world
 Like Edison's phonograph.

Though many wonders have been done
 Beneath this Southern sky,
 And a perpetual motion run
 The fools will ever try.

The Christian world indulges in war,
 They make the cannon fog;
 The devil he invented this
 And apple brandy grog.

In all the works of human art
 Old Satan claims a share,
 But in creation had no part,
 For God himself was there.

Of all inventions man has made
 In these our latter days
 Sure all our reverence should be paid
 By giving God the praise.

Recollections of Cornwallis' Encampment at Dixon's Mill, Chatham Co., North Carolina, .AD. 1781, by Simon Dixon.

It was March, the 22d day,
 That here the Brittish army lay,
 Still covered with the bloody stains
 That Greene gave them on old Guilford's plains.

Toward evening when the toils were done,
 A father thus addressed his son:
 Now go with thy Cousin John,
 Take all the horses from the barn.

A mile or two they took them forth,
 And loosing them they turned back North,
 Whence was the way that they had come,
 And with the bridle started home.

When presently there came in view
 Three hundred horsemen dressed in blue,
 When these boys they had espied
 They called and said: Those bridles hide;

The red coats are about your home,
 And you they'll take your horses from.
 Admonished thus they crossed a bog,
 And hid the bridles under an old log.

And now they see from off the hill
 What does their mind with wonder fill,
 One seldom such a sight enjoys
 As burst asudden on these boys

A string of long lines of red coats stream
 ing on,
 Their arms all glittering in the sun,
 While o'er their heads and waving high
 The British colors proudly fly.

The rolling drums and screaming life
 To the grand scene add a new life,
 They trail along like branchless vines,
 Three thousand men in two long lines.

They rise and fall and sweep around
 As bends the road or lies the ground.
 The curves and waves together bend,
 And to the scene enchantment lend.

It seems to them a mighty flood
 Comes rolling on to where they stood,
 While still further back beyond
 Where trees and hills flank the mill pond.

Wagons and horses, men, move up behind,
 Their flags all fluttering in the wind,
 They halt, and now make a stand,
 And having each location scanned,

Prepare to camp upon the hill
 That stretches Northward from the mill.
 Now as the host o'erspreads the plain
 A band of horsemen came down the lane.

Whose epaulets and caps and swords
 Proclaim them all officer Lords,
 Arrived at the mansion where they stopped
 And nimbly from their horses popped.

They ordered out the landlord's spouse
 And took possession of the house.
 With this gay crowd two horses came,
 Bearing along a wooden frame.

One in the rear, one in the van,
 And on it lay a wounded man,
 An officer of high rank,
 Whose blood old Guilford's soil had drank.

In mark'd contrast he now appears
 To his gay brother officers.
 Yet scarce a week has passed away
 Since that to him eventful day

Colonel Webster led his comrades on,
 Where charging hosts made blood run down,
 And his fate is only sad to tell,
 One of the three thousand men who fell.

The hill now groans beneath the tramp
 Of thousands fixing up their camp.
 They chose for it the forest scene,
 A promising wheatfield clothed in green.

That which had been the farmer's pride
 'Neath martial feet is now destroyed,
 A common fate wherever war's trained
 Is now let loose by wicked men.

To ruin all they had desires,
 So took the rails to build their fires,
 And to build a spacious pen
 That night to keep their cattle in.

Of which they took full many a score,
 And slaughtered here but eighty-four,
 As Cornwallis lay in the big stone house
 It was here that gold, Simon's spouse,

After the family went down the hill
 To take refuge in the old Fulmo mill,
 She thought to take the solace of a smoke,
 What old woman wouldn't under such a joke?

But disappointment was her lot,
 She found she had her pipe forgot,
 And though it was among her foes
 To regain it up she goes

As she stepped into the yard,
 True at his post the watchful guard
 Presents his bayonet with tiger's gripe
 Forbids to get even her old pipe.

She spoke, her words were overheard,
 His lordship promptly interfered,
 And granted what she did invoke
 The privilege to take a smoke.

Close to the race above the mill,
 In the form of a sweet potato hill,
 They stacked their arms upon the ground,
 The muzzles up, the butts were down.

The soldiers around their arms did flock,
 Each musket mounted on its own flint lock.
 A lad draws nigh to view them here,
 He is noticed by a guardsman near.

Who, as he looks, addressed him thus:
 Where is General Greene, the rebel cuss?
 When they had gotten their goods all packed,
 Went to the mill its contents to ransack.

Seized all the corn, meal, likewise fine flour,
 Would have taken more if it had been there.
 See, what a fine lot of grain we have found,
 A mill to grind it, explained all 'round.

Ho! Ho! Where's the miller? their leader
did cry.

He looked, no miller could his eyes espy.

Said: Let out the water on the old wheel,
And pour up the grain, we'll soon have fine
meal.

None seemed overpowered to put forth the
hand,

And two or three times he urged the com-
mand.

Their business had been to fight and to kill,
They knew next to nothing about tending a
mill.

At length one is found to come up to the
scratch,

He poured the corn in the hopper and step-
ped to the hatch.

For, unlike the Dutchman, his stones all dull,
He never once thought to take more toll.

For some time on the wheel the water had
flowed,

Yet moving around no sign had it showed.

When their appearance was known

He, stopping the mill, let the lightning staff
down,

Letting both stones come entirely together.

Now the runner was held hard and fast by
the other.

Draw up the hatch, let on some more water.

The hatch is clear up, what can be the matter?

Now a bunch of red coats, as it still did not
move,

Seized hold of the arms to give it a shove.

Others stepped on the side where the waters
did flow,

And thought by their strength they might
force it to go.

They pushed, shoved and shouldered and
hollered, but still

Which brought many a curse on the rebel
old mill.

The Irish, with their oaths, kept up a terrible
clatter,

English, Scotch and Welsh kept up a terri-
ble chatter,

But still the mill stood fast in its pride,
 And all the rash oaths still stood and defied.
 While over and around them its weapons it
 plied,
 Threw mud and cold water on this and on
 that side,
 For over half an hour their memories did try,
 The thing is sure bewitched, some, half cred-
 ulous, did cry.

Now the sun had sunk down in the West,
 And the English cockades began to lower
 their crest.
 They looked at each other, said: "Give up,
 we must."
 So the proud lion dropped his tail in the dust.
 America's proud eagle flaps his wings at the
 story,
 For the British succumb, and the old mill got
 the glory.
 They gave up the contest, and proclaimed
 aloud
 They had not a miller in all that whole crowd.
 And it may be said of the battle of Dixon's
 Mill,
 Their foes blood in rain English armies did
 spill.
 They were forced to make more use of their
 legs
 Than they did when they fought the Battle
 of the Kegs.

BY I. J. B.

Cornwallis was cut to pieces
 To fight he thought 'twas no use
 He left all his wounded
 Under a flag of truce.

The Quakers all assembled
 And saw where they had bled,
 They all took compassion
 And buried his dead.

He was harrassed on all sides,
 He could not be still;
 He made his next encampment
 At Captain Bell's mill.

He told Mrs. Bell then
 He had annihilated Green,
 No more of the Continentals
 Would ever again be seen.

Her husband at that time
 Was nowhere to be seen:
 She told him he was in the service
 Of General Nathaniel Greene.

But in a few days he talked more free;
 He said: Another such a victory will annihi-
 late me.
 He had had a drawn battle, no victory was
 won,
 Although he had captured two or three of
 Greene's guns.

Greene sent him a flag, Old Nat got warm,
 He told him he could have four more guns
 at the very same terms;
 At this bold assertion Cornwallis took fright;
 He retreated from Bell's Mill that evening
 and night.

He had scarcely gone and drawn in his guards,
 Before Colonel Washington reined up his
 horse in Mrs. Bell's yard.
 He told her she must have some excuse to
 resort
 And go to Cornwallis and bring a report,

She mounted her horse, never counting the
 cost,
 And soon she was in the midst of Cornwallis'
 host,
 Her commands they were stern, she would
 not be bluffed,
 She told him his soldiers had stolen a part
 of her stuff.

She sat on her horse, she had a keen eye,
 She thought that now would be a good time
 to spy,
 She noticed the distance covered by his
 stacks of guns:
 Colonel Washington could count his men
 almost down to one.

Next morning he retreated across a long
ridge,
He crossed over Deep River on a temporary
bridge,
He got over safely and then he soon found
It would be a wise policy to cut the bridge
down.

He forwarded his army, they marched to right
oblique,
His next stopping place was down at Cross
Creek.
He stopped and rested two days at will,
The name of the place is now Fayetteville.

He started for Wilmington, and as he march-
ed down
Colonel Webster died, and was buried at
Elizabethtown.
The British were gloomy, they said it looked
bad,
They said at the funeral Cornwallis looked sad.

He marched on to Wilmington, by Moore's
battle field,
He expected he himself would, too, have to
yield,
He and Sir Peter Parker were in the Cape Fear
Expecting a victory from the Scotch soldiers
to hear.

But General Moore and Dick Caswell some-
how slipped in between,
(The Scotch soldiers thought that terribly
mean,)
They formed a line of battle, their charge it
was bold,
They captured General McDonald and all
of his gold.

Cornwallis and Admiral Parker heard of
their defeat.
They stretched their sails and made a hasty
retreat;
They went to Fort Moultrie to take it pell
mell;
Colonel Moultrie sent them flying with solid
shot and with shell.

We'll go back to Moore's Creek battlefield,
Where Scotch soldiers fared hard;
This battle was fought the 10th of February,
Before Independence was declared.

The Regulators threw off the foreign yoke of
oppression,
Made Governor Tryon see fun.
They fought a hard battle at Alamance,
In Seventeen seventy-one.

The State was in rebellion,
But they somehow contrived
To declare their independence
In Seventeen seventy-five.

The British said the North Carolinians
Were all a hard lot,
Particularly Major White
With his gunpowder plot.

For pure patriotism they had no lack,
They sent a copy of their Independence to
Philadelphia by Captain Jack.
William Hooper and Thomas Jefferson got
the matter fixed
And declared a general Independence 4th of
July, '76.

We'll go back to Moore's Creek and see if
Cornwallis will beg.
Oh, no! he's formed a junction with Major
James Craig.
Who procured munitions and rations, and
slowly marched on.
The people of Wilmington were glad he was
gone.

He had no mishaps until he got to the Neuse,
Where he met Colonel Slocum with his cav-
alry troops.
He found in North Carolina was no place to
see him,
And there he abandoned one of Gen Greene's
guns.

It was captured at Guilford, had come all the
rounds,
(It is now mounted in victory in Guilford
Battle grounds)

He marched into Halifax to replenish his
stock;

He was harassed on all sides by Col. Locke.

The ladies of Halifax did him much provoke,
He took his shattered army and crossed the
Roanoke,

And just above Richmond he met LaFayette,
Who gave him "Hail, Columbia," and don't
you forget.

LaFayette retreated and did some good work!
He lead him into the Peninsula at Little York,
Cornwallis expected the British fleet, but lo,
they were French,

Which caused his Lordship to dig him a
trench.

Surrounded by Washington he manouvered
many ways,

But had to surrender in a very few days.

The news of this victory soon spread far and
wide

Lord Fairfax, at Winchester, he fell back
and died.

Washington's brave couriers would never
refuse

To go out in every direction to tell the good
news.

General Clinton at New York repaired to his
house

And soon our country was clear of the Red
Coats

King George, in despair, did yield up the
contest.

Now, student, read history; it will tell you
the rest.

The Patriotic Ladies

I know I am a woman,
For we will all respond,
For we all are patriotic,
We will buy up Liberty Bonds.

Chorus

For we are left alone, all alone,
We are patriotic American women,
And we are not ashamed.
We throw in our little mites
To help out Uncle Sam.
For we are left alone, all alone.

My sweetheart told me of the Ger-
mans,
And how their bullets hiss;
He laid his arm around me
And gave me the good-bye kiss.

Chorus

Our boys are patriotic,
Determined to be free;
They are descendants of the gallant
men
Who marched with General Lee.

Chorus

Our boys are in the trenches,
Their sweethearts to defend;
They will give them Hail, Columbia,
Until this cruel war shall end.

Chorus

Some of them are low in stature,
And some are very tall;
They are the Blue Hen's chickens,
And can face the cannon ball.

Chorus

They all are patriotic,
The truth to you I'll tell;
They'll form a line of battle
And give the rebel yell.

Chorus

They will give them nitroglycerine
bombs,
And make them face about,
And double quick to Germany,
To live on sourkraut.

Chorus

They'll go over there in airplanes,
Their property they will burn.
They'll humble the wicked Germans,
And then they will return.

Chorus

We'll join our right hands together,
And take the name of theirs;
We'll knit our hearts together,
And then we'll have no fears.

Chorus

We will have a happy country;
Her banner is unfurled,
Her Flag and Constitution
Are the oldest in the world.

Chorus

Our Constitution gives us liberty,
It has been amended fifteen times,
It's worthy of song and story,
Of poetry and of rhyme.

Chorus

We'll cry out for our country,
We'll do that with every breath:
In the language of Patrick Henry:
"Give me liberty or give me death".

Chorus

Now, patriotic maidens,
With your sweethearts correspond,
And rally to their rescue,
And buy a Liberty Bond.

Chorus

Our old veterans are patriotic
I know we would be free,
If they could only march to Germany
Under the command of General Lee.

Chorus

The Ways of the World

Some people boldly take their stand,
Move corner stones, steal neighbors' land,
They live by thievery at their ease
And sneak around and cut down line trees.

Their neighbors' land they do adore,
They will slip further o'er and hack a few
more.
They never take the Bible for a stand
That says cursed is he that stealeth land.

But they will tell poor sinners of an awful hell,
Not dreaming that they will get a smell,
And all poor sinners they will deride
And say: Behold! we are sanctified.

They skip around and have their glee,
Like Zaccheus of old they will climb a tree,
And there they will take the Saviour in,
And say: Behold! we cannot sin.

The Lord will let them have their fun,
He has said in His Word there is none
good, not one,
And if they make Him out a liar
There is danger of hellfire.

You know we are all here on probation,
And have the promise of damnation;
There are other people we do not admire
That oppress the laborer in his hire.
They will swindle when they buy or sell
And preach poor sinners down to hell.

The category of sins is deemed the worst,
But remember the extortioner cometh first;
To own the world is their whole desire;
They, too, have the promise of hellfire.

In half the families we find a flaw,
Represented by Jacob and Esau.
Esau must drudge and carry the billet
And Jakey he must sop up the skillet.

The pious will say this should not remain;
The truth is blamed but never shamed.
Now take this home for all I care,
The cap that fits you sure must wear.

I have observed these things from early youth.
 Reader, this is the naked truth.
 This subject is well diagnosed,
 Such evils ought to be exposed.

The young will think and ponder then
 Be better women and better men.
 They will give such vices an awful blow,
 And ever, ever scorn to stoop that low.

My readers will think that I am tough
 Because I treat the world so rough;
 For conscience bids me not to shrink,
 But utter boldly what I think.
 Let Christian people be more refined,
 And by their good works let their light
 shine.

We know he is a darling toy
 Because he's mother's little boy.
 You know it has always been the rule
 To make a dog of mother's fool.
 Now parents to you the truth I'll tell,
 You need not do anything more to get to
 h—.

I know my readers will be disposed
 To know by whom this was composed;
 It was composed and closely written
 By no one in the world but I. J. Brittain.

White Oak Mills

(Yankee Doodle)

The old White Oak Tree of no renown,
 It stood here all alone,
 Its friends were few and far between
 Until it met with Caesar Cone.

Thou hast been here two hundred years,
 And saw the Indian roam;
 No woodman's axe shall e'er thee touch,
 For this shall be my home.

And on thy mission strong and brave,
 A-waving to and fro,
 Thou wilt be firmly standing here
 When death has laid me low.

The time will come when thou wilt fall
 And never have a pain.
 And thou wilt crumble and decay,
 And I will rise again.

The old Professor in his muse,
 He thought of brick and sills;
 I will perpetuate thy name
 By building White Oak Mills.

A giant factory I will build,
 And ship my cloth in rolls,
 And thy good name my trade mark be,
 Shall go from Pole to Pole.

The Northern people made a rush
 To build up cotton mills;
 The morning whistles now are heard,
 And echo through the hills.

The Lord decreed that we should work,
 And earn our daily bread,
 In his great wisdom sent them here,
 For his people to be fed.

Proximity was the pioneer,
 We saw her people thrive,
 And other mills have since been built,
 And now they number five.

The owners of those cotton mills
 Will foster enterprise;
 The Draper looms insert their quills
 And yet they have no eyes.

While walking through the cotton mills,
 We see the spindles whirl,
 And all this noise would soon be hushed
 But for those pretty girls.

We knew this place in auld lang syne,
 It then was termed hard scramble;
 But brighter days are dawning now,
 They came with Robert Campbell.

Now, rural folks, I pray take heed,
 Have a respect for those,
 Who earn their bread by honest toil,
 You know they make your clothes.

Your bleachings and your other clothes,
 Your stockings and your frills,
 Are made by people of noble worth,
 The products of the mills.

A Tan Bark Peeling

Captain Southerland is enterprising,
 He is making his mark;
 He has a gang of hoboes
 A peeling Tan Bark.

We are all in fine spirits,
 And are now doing well;
 We are gentlemen boarders
 At the Mountain Hotel.

Our quarters are cozy,
 We have all complete,
 With Aunt Sal for cook,
 And plenty to eat.

We have fancy bread and flavors,
 Potatoes and stew,
 White sugar, good coffee,
 And sasengers, too.

We have our romps
 And pastimes,
 Sometimes run a race,
 Reflecting that labor is not a disgrace.

The dude may talk politics
 And sit in the shade,
 But he has to come to his Uncle Ike
 To learn how leather is made.

It is a poor subject
 But my rustic muse
 Has teased me to sing about
 Leather and shoes,

Until I have concluded
 It might be the best
 To humor her
 In such a simple request.

You know all the leather
 Is first in raw hides,
 And all the large skins
 Are cut into sides.

And yet every side
 Has two of its own,
 As unlike in texture
 As cloth and whalebone.

The whole of the process
 It is needless to state,
 You know upper-leather
 Is not sold by weight.

But sole-leather is
 And always
 Left thick
 With all the bark on that chances to stick.

The Tanner and the Curriers
 To please a vain taste
 Must dress down the leather
 To a scandalous waste.

Yet Ladies and Dandies
 Like thin shoes so well,
 The leather must suit them
 In order to sell.

The thicker for men folks
 We think would be right,
 While the thinnest for women
 Is always too light.

Thousands die of consumption
 From the corsets they use,
 Yet thousands more take it
 By wearing thin shoes.

Next comes the shoemaker,
 Who makes it still worse,
 And with the thin leather
 Increases the curse.

The last should be nearly
 As broad as the foot,
 With instep and measure
 Proportioned to suit.

And let every Dude
 Who has a sore toe,
 Tell where the shoe pinches,
 If he's sense to know.

And all the shoemakers
 Should ever refuse
 To put such rotten shavings
 In leather and shoes.

**Composed by the Author for Cigarette
Factory**

The Lord in His wisdom
Commands us to work,
His promise: No bread
To the man that will shirk.

We are working for Reynolds,
Surely we'll win,
The gate will fly open,
And we will march in.

Our girls they are happy,
They never do fret,
They sit at their tables
And prepare Camel Cigarettes.

Now this is the truth
And no idle joke,
They are not made to chew,
But most excellent to smoke.

Thanksgiving will come,
Now, girls, never fear,
It will be around to see us
In November, each year.

Then you can get married
And none need to fret;
You can have a turkey dinner
And smoke Camel Cigarettes.

Mr. Reynolds calls his hands his people,
Some have been here quite a whet;
They put up millions of packages
Of Camel Cigarettes.

Our smokers praise their flavor,
They will not condescend
To smoke any other brand
But the Turkish blend.

When the writer was a boy
Winston was nowhere.
They had a courthouse and a jail,
And a nigger was living here.

But now she's rich and powerful,
Her banner is unfurled.
The progress of Winston Salem
Is surprising to all the world.



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